

Premier headlines homeless fundraiser

ac.care major fundraiser returns & adds almost \$130,000 to the coffers



ac.care's major fundraiser, the Limestone Coast Support Homeless People Luncheon, has enjoyed a triumphant return to the calendar, raising almost \$130,000 for work in the homelessness space.

The business networking and fundraising event was held at The Barn Palais on Friday raised funds for ac.care's work supporting people at risk of or experiencing homelessness in country South Australia. South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas was the headline act for the 2023 event.

The region's premiere business networking luncheon had to be postponed in 2020, despite being sold out, due to COVID-19, which caused numerous delays and finally the cancellation last year ahead of its return this year.

ac.care chief executive officer Shane Maddocks explained the organisation effectively lost \$250,000 in fundraising potential as the 2018 event raised \$125,000 and two subsequent cycles of the luncheon, held every two years, had not been able to proceed in 2020 and 2022.

"We are grateful for the support we receive from businesses and the broader community both at the luncheon and throughout the year," he said. "Sadly the increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing in the Limestone Coast is leading to more people than ever seeking ac.care's support and this event is pivotal in delivering a significant fundraising boost to help meet

growing demand and connect our organisation with local businesses to explore further collaboration and partnerships to increase our impact.

"Every dollar of the incredible \$127,786 raised will go towards our work supporting people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

"This major fundraiser truly makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of vulnerable country people at times of crisis and we could not achieve what we do without such significant and valued support."

The event was the brainchild of the late Barry Maney OAM. "We were thrilled to be back and proud to continue the legacy of the late Barry Maney, who brought businesses together for the first time over 10 years ago for the first luncheon to support our work and humbled that the generosity of our community continues," Mr Maddocks said.

Bringing the luncheon together is the result of hard work from ac.care staff and a host of sponsors and other volunteers - The Barn, DiGiorgio Family Wines, Coopers, Thomas Foods - Australia, Barry Maney Group, auctioneer Andrew Whan from Miller Whan and John, emcee Di Ind of Limestone Coast Solutions and guest speaker Premier of South Australia Peter Malinauskas.

"A special thank you also to the brave people who shared their deeply personal stories of how ac.care helped them move from

homelessness to a more secure future," Mr Maddocks said.

"Together we are changing lives for the better and helping people move from crisis to stability, safety and hopefulness.

"We are grateful to have this support to be able to do more for the people we work with because we are passionate about all country South Australians having a safe home, enough money to live on and strong, positive relationships."

PREMIER'S VISIT

While the ac.care Limestone Coast Support Homeless People Luncheon was the centrepiece of the Premier's visit, Peter Malinauskas made the most of his whirlwind Mount Gambier sojourn to catch up with some critical local projects and announce a new policy.

Last Thursday he toured Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre, after he was unable to attend the official opening earlier this year, to see exactly how the multi-million dollar facility has come to fruition. City of Mount Gambier CEO Sarah Philpott and Deputy Mayor Max Bruins hosted the Premier for the tour (picture top right).

The Premier also visited the site of another key project - the construction of new public housing in Mount Gambier. It was nine months ago the plans were unveiled and the sod was turned and last week, the Premier was able to tour four completed

homes (pictured centre below with Member for Mount Gambier Troy Bell & Empak Homes' Heath Mitchell). "These are part of our commitment of 564 new public homes as well as halting the sell-off of 580 properties," Mr Malinaskas said. "This is to ensure we can deliver the first proper increase in public housing in South Australia in a generation. Because everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to live."

And in that same space, he

was able to unveil the State Government's Regional Key Worker Housing Scheme (pictured below).

"The first homes will be built for key workers like teachers, police officers and health care workers," the Premier said. "The homes, being built in Mount Gambier, are the first cabs off the rank for our Regional Key Worker Housing Scheme, which is creating a continuous pipeline of homes to retain key workers in country areas."



1. Chris Walter, Alison Boomsma, Trish Van Dyk, Damien Wilson & Ian Wheller
2. Louise Wheller, Jill Scott, Wendy Richardson & Loraine Baron
3. Margot DiGiorgio, Robbie Mason, Frank DiGiorgio & Tess Turner
4. Sara McManus, Gail Richards, Karen Petersen & Maree Thomson
5. Back: Ryan Donovan, Max Bruins & Front: Katherine Baldock, Sophie Bouchier & Kate Hill
6. Back: Dave Gray, Andy Sneath, Judson Wheatley & Front: Jen Gray, Gretel Sneath, Amanda Wheatley & Sarah Barney
7. Joe Moriarty, Tarsh Chapman, Leigh Harpham, Sherri Winter & Shalini McCarthy
8. Charlie Matthews, Rosie French, Damian Radley, Alison Cutting, Kyle Gleed & Sophie O'Connor
9. Tim Brennan
10. Paul Jenner, Megan Jenner & Shawn Stockwell
11. Shane Hosking, Michael Hillstone, Matt Cutting & Andrew Hunter
12. Janine Cribb, Adam Hodge & Leanne Shepherd
13. Jason Wallace
14. Back: Jason Wallace, Peter Malinauskas, Shane Maddocks, Rick Fisher & Front: Di Ind & Clare Scriven
15. Di Ind
16. Morgan Amy & Mel Smith

PHOTOS BY FRANK MONGER